

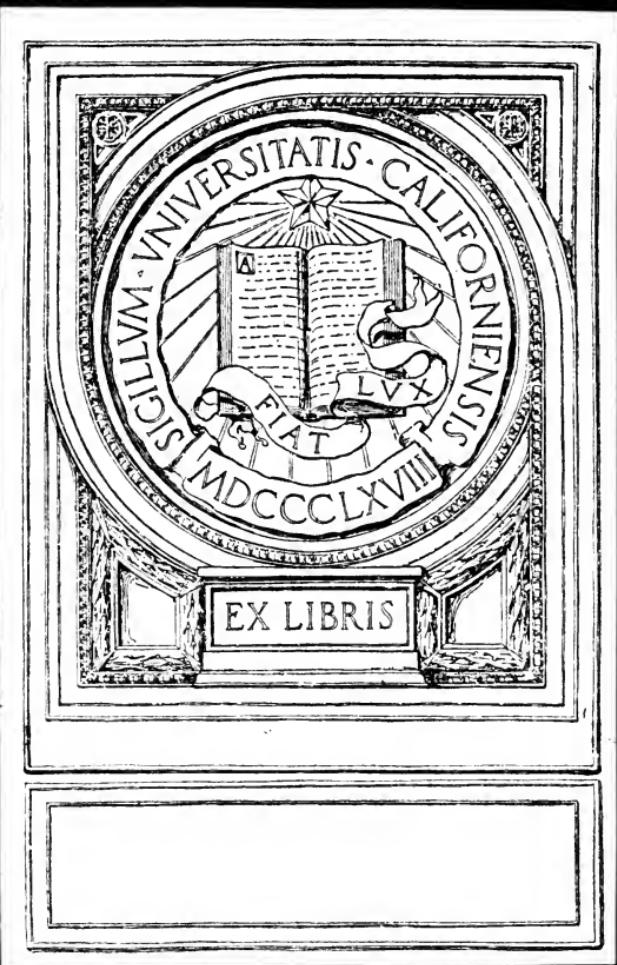
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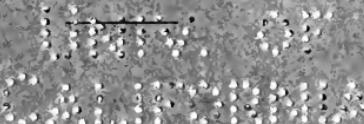


# ORDER AND ACCESSION DEPARTMENT

BY

F. F. HOPPER

PREPRINT OF  
MANUAL OF LIBRARY ECONOMY  
CHAPTER XVII



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## A. L. A. MANUAL OF LIBRARY ECONOMY

- Chap. I. "American Library History," by C. K. BOLTON.
- II. "The Library of Congress," by W. W. BISHOP.
- IV. "The College and University Library," by J. I. WYER, JR.
- XVII. "Order and Accession Department," by F. F. HOPPER.
- XXII. "Reference Department," by E. C. RICHARDSON.
- XXVI. "Bookbinding," by A. L. BAILEY.

The above chapters are each printed in a separate pamphlet.  
Price 10 cents each.

Projected chapters now in preparation are as follows:  
"Loan Department"; "Branches and Other Distributing Agencies"; "Pamphlets, Clippings, Maps, Music"; "Book Selection"; "Classification"; "Commissions, State Aid and State Agencies"; "Work with the Blind"; "Library Service"; "State Libraries"; "Fixtures, Furniture, Fittings and Supplies"; "Free Public Libraries"; "Catalog"; "Shelf Department"; "Museums, Art Galleries, Lectures"; "Public Documents"; "Library Training"; "Special Libraries"; "Administration"; "Bibliography"; "Public Library and Public Schools"; "Library Work with Children"; "Legislation"; "Buildings."

## XVII

### ORDER AND ACCESSION DEPARTMENT

FRANKLIN F. HOPPER  
The Tacoma Public Library

#### I. ORGANIZATION

The order and accession department of a large library should be in charge of some one familiar with book-trade conditions, prices and discounts, as well as with books and library needs. Knowledge of library technique is a secondary consideration. Certainly, however, the assistants must understand the details of library records. At the beginning of each fiscal year the librarian or board should determine the amount available for book purchase for each department, and roughly apportion the amounts to be spent for certain classes of books, such as sets of periodicals. The head of the department should conduct the correspondence, decide where orders shall be placed, see that the book funds are spent as apportioned, read auction and second-hand catalogs with the librarian or reference librarian, make or at least decide on the bids at auction sales, and in general see that the book buying of the library is conducted in the cheapest and most business-like way. There should be an order clerk competent to price books and check bills, and an accession clerk. In many libraries the accession work is a part of the catalog department. In libraries large enough to demand another assistant in the order department, there is usually one of higher grade than the two mentioned, who has charge of gifts, continuations, and statistics, and has immediate supervision of all records. Different libraries will necessarily vary the organization to some extent.

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF BUYING

The cardinal principle in buying is business-like economy in securing the best prices possible, always taking into consideration the element of speed.

The first decision must be as to whether a book shall be bought at once: If so it will be ordered in America or imported if the English price be less. If not, a slip will be placed in a "desirable" file awaiting opportunities for cheap purchase at auction, at second hand, or at "remainder" prices.

If a number of new copies of a book are likely to be needed during a year it is wise to order them at one time. This will certainly mean economy in handling and in many cases better rates can be obtained.

Prices and service being equal, a local dealer should receive the business of the library. The speed with which books may be secured on approval and the close relationship which may be established between dealer and library are of great value. If the local dealer is unsatisfactory, it will be best to deal almost wholly with one firm in a book center.

It is generally considered unwise to make a practice of asking bids on lists of books. If not exactly unfair to dealers, it is at any rate poor business policy for the library. Trial orders sent to different jobbers with due insistence upon bottom prices, and subsequent comparison of the various bills will in the long run secure better prices. Occasional estimates from various dealers will doubtless give needed information in regard to the rates the library should be getting.

Book agents should be discouraged and extremely few books should be bought by subscription. Such books as atlases it may occasionally be necessary to buy in that way, but there are few other exceptions. Subscriptions should not be made without first seeing the books, except in the case of the publications of private presses and book clubs, which require subscriptions in advance of printing. New editions of encyclopedias and

in fact all subscription books need careful examination. If a subscription edition of a standard book is for any special reason considered desirable, it will almost certainly appear in the second-hand trade at greatly reduced cost in a year's time, but in general subscription editions are not preferable to good trade editions. If the library must subscribe, a discount should be demanded, for it can usually be obtained.

There are actually few rarities, although it often requires time to secure the less common books which only university or the largest public libraries are likely to want. Practically everything the average public library would buy appears in the auction or second-hand catalogs repeatedly. Consequently a library should seldom pay an excessive price for any book, no matter how desirable. There will be other opportunities to buy it.

Speed in getting books is often most important. One of the best ways to secure new books early is to inspect the samples of the publishers' "travelers" when they come to get orders from local booksellers, and then order the desirable ones before publication.

### 3. PRICES AND DISCOUNTS

Until 1901 there were no definite regulations in regard to the discounts which booksellers gave to libraries. Upon the plea of protection for the retail dealer, however, on February 13 of that year the "net price" system was adopted at a meeting of the American Publishers' Association, reducing the discounts to 10 per cent to libraries for most new books of non-fiction. The limitation of discounts was to be removed one year after publication. The Association agreed that all copyrighted books first issued by the members of the Association after May 1, 1901, should be published at net prices which the resolution "recommended" should be reduced from the prices at which similar books had been issued theretofore. It was provided that there should be exempt from this agreement all school

books, such works of fiction (not juveniles) and new editions as the individual publisher might desire, books published by subscription and not sold through the trade, and such other books as were not sold through the trade. The purely technical book publishers were not parties to the agreement. In accordance with the "recommendation" that list prices be reduced, librarians were given to understand that the publishers would reduce prices to such an extent that the cost to libraries would be increased only from 8 per cent to 12 per cent. The expectation of librarians in this respect was never generally fulfilled, the publishers maintaining that the increased cost of production and increased royalties to authors prevented any reduction in list prices. When libraries criticized the Association for failing to reduce the list prices the publishers replied that the Association had nothing to do with fixing prices, but only with maintaining them, each publisher being free to set his own prices. In February, 1902, an additional rule was adopted by which fiction issued by the publishers who were members of the Association was sold to those entitled to the 10 per cent discount on non-fiction at no greater discount than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. In January, 1904, "juveniles" were included in this fiction rule. In January, 1907, the American Publishers' Association, because of decisions of the courts relating to combinations in restraint of trade, changed its existing rules relating to net prices and then re-enacted them in a form in which no agreement to maintain net prices was stated formally. Recommendations only were made. Agreements to maintain prices are now made between the individual publisher and the booksellers. The new arrangement has caused no change, however, in the working of the net-price system as far as libraries are concerned.

The books now in print in this country and sold through the trade may be divided into the following classes:

1. New copyright non-fiction on which the discount to libraries is limited to 10 per cent within the year following pub-

lication. At the expiration of the year, a longer discount is allowed, but it is rarely as much as on "regular" books, and it is not often possible to obtain more than 25 per cent discount.

2. Fiction and juveniles treated as if they belonged to class 1.

1. Few books were published in this class previous to 1910, when a large part of the fiction was issued at this net or "fixed" price.

3. Many scientific and technical books published at a "net" price but not under the same regulations as those in class 1. The discounts obtainable by libraries range from 10 per cent to 25 per cent.

4. Many school and college textbooks published at a "net" price. From 10 per cent to  $16\frac{2}{3}$  per cent is the usual discount on this class.

5. Imported books listed in this country at a "net" price. The discount varies, but is usually short.

6. "Regular" books. Discount subject to no special limitation, but varies greatly. Many of the so-called "regular" books are those on which the copyright has expired. Previous to May, 1901, most of the new books were "regular," but the majority are now published at a net price.

7. From February, 1902, until 1909 most fiction published was called "protected." In January, 1904, "juveniles" were included in the same class. Discount to libraries was limited to one-third within the year following publication, but after the year a dealer was free to give whatever discount he could afford. Since the introduction of the "fixed price" fiction (class 2) the publishers seem to have stopped issuing "protected" fiction.

If a new book is to be purchased immediately and it is found that the English price is sufficiently lower than the American to justify delay, the book will be imported. In making the decision, it must be borne in mind that most new English books of non-fiction are net books on which there is no discount given to libraries. If the price in this country is net, one must find to which class of net books it belongs. If it has been published for more than a year, and belongs to either class 1 or 2 (that is, books published according to the rules of the American Pub-

lishers' Association), care must be taken that the library gets a discount larger than 10 per cent. Occasionally it is possible to obtain from a dealer an extra long discount on "regular" books if a sufficient number of "net" books are ordered at the same time. Publishers who are not also jobbers will almost always refuse, in the interests of the booksellers, to sell directly to libraries, although particularly large orders for a few of their titles have sometimes induced some of them to sell directly at a special rate. If a local dealer does not have a good stock of the popular books, both juvenile and adult, which libraries are constantly buying and replacing, or if he cannot furnish them at good rates, a library should not hesitate to buy them from the large city jobbers. The jobbers usually have regular rates of discount on the books of the seven different classes and sometimes of different publishers. If a trial order given to another jobber shows that certain classes of books or even certain titles can be secured more cheaply from him, it is very likely that your first jobber will meet his rival's figures or even beat them in order to retain your business. It is wise to deal mostly with one jobber, but the buyer must never forget or let the jobber forget that there are competitors who are after business. It sometimes happens that a library buys every year a very large number of certain titles, probably "juveniles." If the English edition is cheaper than the American, the library will import, although it may be inconvenient to do so because of the difficulty of getting many copies of a book through the custom house in one year. The lower English price, however, compels the library to import as many as it can. The American publisher of the book naturally does not like to see large orders for his own importations going to England, and he may be induced to sell the books to your jobber at such special rates that the jobber will be able to meet the English prices to the library. The buyer for the library must never forget that libraries are an important factor in the book market, not only because they get such large num-

bers of books, but because they are practically the only buyers of many items in the publishers' lists, because they keep many books in print by their orders for replacements, and because library business is sure pay.

#### 4. COPYRIGHT AND IMPORTATIONS

The copyright laws of the United States, contained in the law approved March 4, 1909, allow the importation, in one invoice, of one copy of any authorized edition of a book in English even if it has American copyright, when imported for use and not for sale by any school, university, or free public library. The importation of pirated editions is prohibited. Additional copies may be imported in subsequent invoices, and by a ruling of the United States Treasury Department, a copy may be imported for each branch of a public library, a branch being considered as a separate library (see Treasury decisions under tariff and internal revenue laws, etc., 1898, vol. 1, pp. 40-41). As the larger importers receive shipments each week, one copy of a book can be imported by them each week for each library and for each branch. It is necessary to make an oath before a notary preliminary to free entry for each shipment, declaring that the books are imported for use of the library named and not for sale. The importer must also make oath on the same sheet that he has imported the listed books solely for said library. In addition a receipt for every lot of books so imported must be filed within 90 days of entry. Neither oaths nor receipts are required for books in foreign languages or books in English more than twenty years old, but for dictionaries and works consisting of plates without text or with index only, which are considered dutiable at the regular 25 per cent rate, papers for free entry for libraries are required.

English books may be imported through London agents or American importers. Most libraries find that for small orders it is cheaper to buy through the importer, who will pay all

customs and carriage charges. For the largest orders and for second-hand books London agents are probably the most effective, but for such importations an additional cost of at least 5 per cent must be reckoned for case, cartage, insurance, consular invoice (for a shipment of the value of \$100), freight, broker's fee on this side, and transportation from the dock to the library. Boxes from English agents are usually sent in bond to local customs house. For books in foreign languages the New York importer is more prompt and his prices are about the same as those of a continental agent. The former has already in stock many of the foreign books on library orders, and consequently the delay of importing is saved. The prices of many foreign books, particularly French books, as listed in the trade bibliographies, are for unbound copies. Many libraries direct that such books be bound abroad, where the work is done cheaply and well. For picking up out-of-print or second-hand books, the continental agent is usually better than the importer. Neither English nor other foreign books should be imported through a local bookseller. The importers usually charge at the following rates, f.o.b. New York.

20 to 22 cents per shilling.

25 cents per shilling for net books.

25 to 27 cents per shilling for second-hand books.

20 to 22 cents per mark.

18 to 19 cents per franc.

18 to 19 cents per lira.

21 cents per peseta.

45 cents per florin.

30 cents per kroner (Scandinavian).

65 cents per rouble.

22 cents per krone (Austrian, Hungarian, etc.).

Books may now be sent by mail from abroad very cheaply. Although there is a good chance of their being damaged, it is obvious that for books wanted in a hurry, or for very small orders, it may be wise for libraries to get them by mail.

Packages should not be registered or there will be the trouble of making declarations before customs officials. Books can be sent from England at the rate of 8 cents per pound, from France and Switzerland at 10 cents per pound, and from Germany at 12 cents per pound in parcels weighing not over four pounds. A parcel-post service has also been introduced between Germany and the United States, and England and the United States, at 12 cents per pound, limit eleven pounds for each parcel. Much trouble will be avoided if all books from Canada are sent by mail unregistered, not by express.

Small libraries usually find it is impractical to separate orders for the English from the American books. Reliable jobbers in the large cities will import English books for them, sending the necessary oaths to the librarian. Small libraries do not often contain the trade bibliographies necessary for a comparison of English and American prices, and if they do the librarians cannot spend the time for investigations.

#### 5. AUCTION AND SECOND-HAND BUYING

Buying at auction and second hand is the only way in which a library can get many of the most important books, those long out of print. It is wise to have a file of cards for out-of-print books which it is hoped to find in auction or second-hand catalogs, for recent books which it is hoped to pick up cheaply, and for fiction and miscellaneous standard books which can be found at cheap prices either in the second-hand catalogs or more easily by personal visits to the second-hand shops. These cards should show favorable prices that are quoted in the catalogs from time to time. Most books can be bought more cheaply by wise auction buying than at second hand. The second-hand dealers get much of their stock at auction sales at bargain prices and libraries should do likewise. In buying sets of periodicals, however, it is probably better to purchase from reliable dealers who make a specialty of this line, for the perfection guaranteed

is worth the extra money it costs. Recent books of a popular character, such as biographies, travels, histories, can be picked up for half the price of publication within a short time from second-hand dealers, particularly English dealers, such as Mudie. Subscription books are frequently found soon after publication in auction catalogs, and in the catalogs of both American and English second-hand dealers, at a fraction of their original cost. Fiction (not too new) and added copies of popular standard books can be obtained at cheap rates from American second-hand dealers, but it is desirable to see second-hand fiction before buying, in order to be sure that edition and condition are satisfactory. Orders from American catalogs should go direct to the dealer. If the library has an agent in the same city as the dealer, the books should be sent to the agent for inclosure to the library, to avoid express charges. Personal visits to the second-hand dealers are certainly to be preferred to the practice of sending lists, particularly of fiction to be picked out from stock. Children's books in proper editions are difficult to find in second-hand shops, and inspection previous to purchase is particularly desirable. Many consider second-hand children's books dangerous because of possible exposure to contagious diseases. Visits to second-hand shops are advisable for building up a "stock" collection, that is a collection of the most popular books bought at bargain prices which can be drawn upon for replacements and added copies. It does not pay to buy second-hand fiction in England. If out-of-print books are wanted quickly the library must advertise in the *Publisher's weekly* "Books Wanted" columns or in similar columns in other periodicals, although books secured in this way usually cost more than if picked up at auction. Never advertise in this country through a dealer. It is cheaper, quicker, and better for a library to advertise directly. For English and other foreign books, however, the importer or preferably the foreign agent should conduct the advertising, the librarian always naming the highest price he

is willing to pay, unless he is willing to wait for quotations to be submitted.

It is doubtless true that the librarian of a small library has no time to read auction catalogs, but it is the best way economically, and gradually but surely, to build up a good collection. Some libraries of from 15,000 to 25,000 volumes find it possible and advantageous to spend some time reading catalogs of second-hand books if not auction catalogs. On common books a bid of one-third the price of publication will yield excellent results. For the more expensive books, records of sales recorded in "American book prices current," in the similar English records, or in the best catalogs of second-hand dealers, must be consulted. Bids should usually be not much in excess of the lowest prices recorded. There are few books which do not repeatedly appear in the auction catalogs, and a book not secured at the first bidding can probably be got in a short time at another sale. If the library cannot afford to bid what a book is worth or what it is likely to bring, that is no reason why a very low bid should not be made. Many valuable items are in this way often picked up very cheaply. Bids may be sent on the blanks provided, either to the auctioneer direct, who will execute the bids with no charge, or to a regular agent who will attend the sales and charge a commission. For the smaller libraries it is doubtless best to send directly to the auctioneer. Libraries which do much buying at auction find it better to have a thoroughly reliable agent who can be depended upon to carefully inspect the books, to secure the items the libraries want at a price as much below the limit set as possible, to pick up real bargains which he knows the libraries will want, and to report back to the libraries the prices brought by the items he did not secure. The advantage of this report on prices is that they may be noted on the order card, which can again be filed in the "desirable" file. This additional information will be valuable when it is time to bid again on the item.

The "notable" sales are to be avoided, as books sell at higher prices.

There are a number of dealers who make a specialty of "remainders," which can often be secured at one-third to one-half the prices of publication, in perfect condition. "Remainders" is the trade name for the copies of certain books left on the hands of the publishers when the sale has become so slow that he can no longer afford to give them shelf room. He sells them to dealers in new or second-hand books at so low a price that the dealers can afford to dispose of them cheaply. Many books sent to newspaper offices for review are thrown on the market at cheap prices soon after publication.

#### 6. EXCHANGES, SALE DUPLICATES, AND GIFTS

Excellent use of library publications is possible in obtaining similar publications from other libraries, and the publications of many societies and institutions. Usually two records are kept of these exchanges of library publications, a mailing list of libraries to which reports, bulletins, etc., are sent, and a card check list for similar publications currently received.

The exchange of duplicates has not been developed as much as would seem to be advantageous. Every library receives gifts of books not needed, perhaps because there may be copies already in the library. Gradually these books become a large collection, increased perhaps by withdrawals of unused books from branches. Many libraries put all such books together in one alphabetical file, and some very large libraries separate them into two groups, (1) those that may have a demand in the future and those that have value to some other library, and (2) those that are of such slight value that exchange with other libraries is out of the question. These latter are sometimes set aside for sale in bulk by auction or to a dealer. The first group is sometimes arranged in broad classes. As opportunity allows, these duplicate books, certainly those in class one, may

be listed, and the lists sent to other libraries on cards or type-written lists, or published in bulletins or annual reports, or, where the duplicate collection is very large, it has been found useful to print lists of "Offers" on exchange account such as those sent out by the Library of Congress on galley strips. If books have slight money value there is no valuation affixed to the titles on the list and they are exchanged on the basis of the number of volumes. More valuable books are exchanged on a price basis. The lists of "Wants" which the Library of Congress prints in the same way as the lists of "Offers" are also suggestive as to what other large libraries may do. A despised collection of duplicates can be made very valuable for exchange purposes, but there is as yet little attention paid to it in most libraries. If all large libraries will publish in their annual reports and bulletins titles of value that they have for exchange, indicating "Wants" at the same time, much can be accomplished. Many books which do not contain library stamps can be exchanged with second-hand dealers to advantage. Dealers will visit libraries to see what the duplicates are. Most libraries keep few duplicates of United States documents, since these can be shipped back to the Superintendent of Documents, who supplies franks. The idea of central clearing-houses for duplicates has frequently been considered, but to little advantage. However some state libraries have performed excellent service as clearing-houses for odd numbers of magazines.

The records of exchanges of duplicates are usually kept either on cards or in a loose-leaf exchange ledger, the cards or the sheets being arranged alphabetically by libraries. In one column is kept the record of the number of volumes and pamphlets sent out and in another column the number received. In case of priced exchanges the value of each title or of each shipment is recorded.

A printed form should not be used in soliciting gifts; a courteous letter, written with care, should be the means used.

In general all gifts offered should be accepted, unless impossible conditions are attached. It is desirable that the donor grant the library the privilege of using the gift for exchange if it ever becomes of no use on the library shelves. It is possible to obtain many state, municipal, and society publications if proper request is made. If the library has its own publications for exchange, a mention of willingness to send such publications in return for the gift sought will greatly increase the books a library may secure in this way. All gifts should be acknowledged promptly, and a record made on a card under the name of the donor. The card should contain, in addition, the address of the donor, a list of the gifts, the number of volumes, and the date received. If needed for statistics the cards can be kept for a month or a year in a temporary file, and later be transferred to a permanent file. A careful line should be drawn between books received as gifts and those received as exchanges.

A small library can do but little with exchanges, except perhaps in exchanging odd numbers of periodicals through a clearing-house, but it should not hesitate to seek gifts because it has no library publications to exchange.

#### 7. ORDER RECORDS AND THE CHECKING OF BILLS

There should be a file of outstanding orders, the cards being arranged alphabetically by authors' names. A simple form of order card containing few details is recommended. These cards should contain author's surname, initials of his first and middle names (the first name in full if there is no middle name), brief title, volume number or number of volumes, edition, publisher, price, year of publication, and, if purchase has been requested by anyone, that person's name and address. Where importation is considered, it is wise to give both English and American prices and publishers. Where books are ordered for branches as well as for a central library, or for different departments of a university, a simple printed form is usually devised

giving names of branches or departments, space for number of copies, and date. If the library is a large public library, one order file for the central library and another for the branches is usually considered advisable. When the order is sent the name of the dealer and date of the order should be stamped on the card. The typewritten order list (sometimes a part of a letter to the dealer) is arranged either by publishers or alphabetically by authors, and edition, publisher, and list price specified. A letter-press or carbon copy of the list should be kept at the library. Some libraries use an order slip copied in triplicate by the use of carbon paper laid between the order slips. One copy is kept at the library for the order file, one copy is sent to bookseller, and the third copy is used for ordering Library of Congress cards. If these cards are to be ordered the serial number should be put on the order card when the prices are looked up. Sometimes a carbon copy of the order slip is sent to a branch which may be ordering the book. The bookseller's copy of the order slip should be returned when the order is filled. For books bid for at auction, the date of the sale, number of item in the catalog, and name of the auction firm should be given on the card, which should be filed among regular outstanding orders.

Dealers should arrange the items on bills alphabetically, and when books and bills are received, the cards should be drawn from the order file. Working from the bill, it is convenient to place the books on a truck; then working from invoice and cards together to make sure of correctness of charges and editions, the source and price, with date of bill if desired, should be marked in each book, or in the first volume only of a set. Writing the price in cipher is not recommended; it takes too much time. Some libraries do not write price, etc., in book, but put order card in the book until the accession work is done. In checking the bill, the branch or department for which the item is wanted may be indicated opposite the charge, for later

distribution. The date of receipt (or date of the invoice) should be stamped on the card and on the invoice, and if books are accessioned, it is desirable to have them entered under the same date. Some libraries put the cards back in the same file, but a separate file for books received is the more general custom. The cards should remain in this file until the books are cataloged, or, if there is plenty of room, it may be desirable to keep cards for replacements, added copies, and branch books for six months or a year, or a sufficient length of time to answer all reasonable questions that may arise concerning them.

Some university libraries do not keep the order cards after the accession record has been made but return them to the department that ordered the books as notice that the books have been received. Some libraries use the order cards permanently for shelf-list cards as they contain a good deal of useful information. In even very small libraries an order record on slips is very desirable since there is always danger of duplication, even though the librarian may think she knows the collection perfectly, and since the slips can be used after the book is cataloged for either accession record or for shelf list.

Some large libraries with numerous branches find it useful to have a card list of books which are likely to be duplicated or replaced. Full notes of desirable editions, publishers, prices, etc., save much time in ordering again.

Generally libraries keep a separate file for continuations, such as annual publications, books coming out in parts, sets appearing by the volume, and books in series when the order has been entered for the whole series. A so-called "continuation" order is a great convenience, since it obviates the necessity of ordering each year such a publication as a city directory or the annual report of a society. Generally speaking, a continuation order for such a series as many of the series of biographies is not advisable, since almost always the series will contain some books which are not particularly desirable. The "continua-

tions" file generally includes state and United States government documents which are received from time to time. Some libraries put an order card for such a publication as the *Cambridge modern history* (which appears a volume at a time) in the regular order file and other libraries in the "continuations" file. It is often necessary to look in both files to find whether a book has been ordered or received. Some libraries put the "gift continuations" in still another file, but this is not the common custom. The main idea of the "continuations" file is analogous to that of the record of current periodicals. The file should be checked over frequently, and requests sent for volumes that are overdue. Usually a specially printed card is used giving space for author and title (such as, American Society of Mechanical Engineers. Transactions), name and address of secretary of the society, publisher and his address, frequency of publication, whether gift or purchase, name of agent, price and cost of each volume, dates of publication, date of original order and call number of the set in the library. There should also be as many spaces as possible on the card for the number of each volume received, the year of its publication, and the date of its receipt. Some of the library-supply houses make special cards for use in a "continuations" file.

A stock record of the books already in the library, those added, withdrawn, or lost and of the resulting number still in the collection should be kept in the order department. It will be wise to keep these statistics up to date. A very simple form can easily be devised.

#### 8. COLLATION

Some libraries formerly collated all books, but the process is a very expensive one, and publishers are usually ready to make good the imperfections even if discovered years after the books were bought. Consequently the general practice now is to collate only books above a definite value. A quick glance

through a book when it is being checked or accessioned will take little time and usually discloses any defacement.

#### 9. THE ACCESSION BOOK

Accession records, or chronological lists of books added to the library, are kept in three different ways.

The first and general one is either the A.L.A. standard or the condensed accession book. Full directions for use are in the front of each accession book. The lines are numbered consecutively and each volume requires a line. The number of each line, called the accession number, is usually stamped or written on the first page after the title-page, about an inch from the bottom and exactly in the middle of the page. Stamping on the reverse of the title-page should be avoided as it will injure the back of the book. If desired, a complete history of each book may be kept by noting withdrawal in the remarks column. It is possible to omit some of the entries for which space is provided, as call number, size, binding, and paging. Unless books are accessioned after being cataloged, entering call numbers in the accession book takes too much time. It saves time to accession books immediately after the invoice is checked, and as neither an absolutely correct form of author's name nor an entry of call number in the accession book is necessary, most libraries consider it wise to accession before cataloging. It may also be said that a book may be loaned to a reader immediately after the accession record is made, but if he has to wait for cataloging (a much slower process) and subsequent accessioning, the delay may easily be too great.

A second method now much used by large libraries, and said to save time, records accessions by lots. The bills of each dealer are numbered chronologically for each year, and filed first alphabetically and second numerically. The accession number consists of the initial or name of the dealer followed by the bill number and the last two figures of the current year.

For example, the sixth bill from McClurg in 1908 would receive the number M608 or McClurg 608. This number is put in the accession book, on the bill, and on the shelf cards. For the form of book used and description of the method consult Miss Stearns's pamphlet *Essentials in library administration* (A.L.A. Library tract no. 6), pp. 45-46. For gifts a memorandum is made in the form of a bill and books added by binding are accessioned from the binding bill. Since publisher, price, and date, as well as the accession number, must be entered on the shelf cards, it is doubtful if this method takes much less time than the more general method of accessioning one book to a line. The form of the book used in accessioning by lot gives spaces for recording withdrawals and for balancing additions and withdrawals. This combination of an accession and stock record is simple and good.

A third method of accessioning is that of the substitution of order cards for accession book. As used by the Public library of the District of Columbia, this method is proving successful and time saving. The order cards first contain the usual information, but after bills are checked, cost-price, binding (when other than cloth), and date of bill are noted on the cards. Corresponding numbers are given to books and cards, and the cards are filed again under author in order or receipt indexes. When the books are cataloged and the catalog cards filed, the order cards are withdrawn from the order of receipt index, where they stand according to author, and filed in the accession list according to number. The last accession number is found from a card kept at the back of the accession file on which at the close of each day this last number is written. A separate record is kept daily of the number of gifts accessioned. This is for monthly statistics. When duplicate copies of a book are received at one time, the inclusive numbers are placed on the face of the card, and the intervening numbers separately on the back. Space is left alongside each number for indicating to

which branch a book is sent and also for noting withdrawal. A separate slip is required for each volume of periodicals or other continuations if added at different times. For libraries which do not care for much bibliographical detail in the records of their books, or for those which note bibliographical detail on their catalog cards, this method of accessioning is doubtless an excellent one.

#### 10. BUYING REPLACEMENTS AND DUPLICATES

The selection of replacements and books to be duplicated is usually not made by the order department. In most large libraries the custom is to send the book slips or other record of all books withdrawn or lost to the order department, with indications as to which books are to be replaced. It is the custom in some libraries to mark on the shelf-list the number of copies of each book which it is desirable to have permanently. Then by reference to the shelf-list it is easy to decide quickly whether a certain copy needs to be replaced. Some libraries are finding it very useful to have a permanent file of all titles approved for replacement and duplication, with notes of desirable editions, publishers, and prices. Such a file expedites the work of ordering and may also help whoever decides on the copies to be replaced. If the only copy of a book a library has is to be replaced, it is usually desirable to secure it quickly, particularly if the cards are left in the catalog during the process of replacement. In sending to the order department lists of books to be replaced or duplicates to be ordered, it is wise to indicate the speed with which orders should be filled, for it is easy to secure these books cheaply in the second-hand trade if some time can be allowed. A large part of replacements and duplicates in public libraries are likely to be children's books, which in general it is wise not to try to get at second hand. Many libraries get much of the fiction second hand, if sufficiently

cheap, and such of the standards as are permanently popular in a special, strong library binding.

Generally the accession number of the book to be replaced is written on the order card, and when the new copy is received the old number is pencilled near the new accession number, so that, in order to preserve the history of the book, this number may be entered in the "remarks" column of the accession book. A very simple method, now sometimes used and particularly to be recommended to small libraries, is to consider all replacements as duplicates (added copies) and so dispense entirely with the replacement records. Still, many libraries think it best to separate the two classes, and even to record separately the amount spent each year for them. The custom of giving a replacement the old accession number has been pretty generally abandoned. A separate record for the new book gives greater accuracy. If a lost book is replaced and the new copy is accessioned on the same number, the original copy may turn up and cause confusion, which can be avoided by giving the replacement a new accession number.

### II. WITHDRAWALS

Formerly most libraries kept withdrawal books, in which there was an entry of one book to a line, like an accession record. The custom is no longer common, however, because it is expensive and not indispensable. Withdrawals are now usually shown simply by marking the accession number off the shelf list, and by counting the number each month for statistics. Many libraries note in the accession book when a book is withdrawn, but this record is not absolutely necessary, although it is a good one to have. A withdrawal card is sometimes used but it can be dispensed with. In most large libraries the order department keeps the records of the total number of books withdrawn as well as the total number added, the records of the

additions and withdrawals by class being kept in the catalog department.

#### 12. BUYING PERIODICALS

The custom in most libraries is to place the yearly order for American magazines with one subscription agency and that for all foreign magazines either with a European agent who sends them all directly to the library by mail, or with their regular New York book importer who secures all the periodicals in weekly bales from London, Paris, or Leipzig and mails them from the New York office to the library. The latter method is generally considered both cheaper and more satisfactory, as there is less danger of damage and loss. Some very large libraries find it advisable to place subscriptions for English periodicals with one dealer and the French, German, and other subscriptions with their various agents for books in those respective tongues. Very small libraries usually place all subscriptions with one American subscription agent who will supply the few foreign periodicals they need at nearly as good rates as do importers. Occasionally a library can secure a better rate for a few periodicals and newspapers by subscribing directly from the publishers. Most libraries prefer to place subscriptions for American periodicals with the same agent year after year as long as the service is satisfactory, as there is a disadvantage in changing agents. Agents handling a library's orders for a considerable period become acquainted with the library's peculiar demands and are in some cases able to save trouble by forestalling demands in the way of providing title-pages, indexes, etc. The prices of magazines are sometimes raised before the expiration of subscriptions. Agents usually know of such changes in advance and will notify librarians to place their orders for those magazines before the change. If a library changes agents constantly, such attention from an agent cannot be expected. It is doubtful whether libraries now find it profitable to secure bids each year, as the situation is now (April,

1911) peculiar. This requires some explanation. In the fall of 1909 a so-called "clearing-house" in New York was started by about twenty-five of the leading magazine publishers of New York. The subscription agencies of any size were practically compelled to join this organization and agree to its rules, which were made to prevent cutting of rates and to force large subscription agencies to clear all subscriptions received from small agents, or the trade, through this organization, instead of sending them direct to the publishers. During the year from October, 1909, to September, 1910, rates were established below which agents were not supposed to sell to libraries. During that year competition seemed to be practically eliminated. During the fall of 1910, however, the clearing-house appeared to be lax in guarding against price cutting. Besides inviting the trade to send subscriptions directly to them, thereby ignoring the large subscription agencies from a trade standpoint, the publishers who are members of the clearing-house each started his own subscription agency to deal with the public direct. They not only invite business direct, but they also through their clearing-house invite the trade to send to them. The rates, as now established by the publishers, are exactly the same for libraries and for individuals, except that in the case of the public generally the periodicals are not supposed to be offered by items but in groups. The following example will explain the situation:

If a librarian personally subscribes for *Current Literature*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Hampton's Magazine*, he will be charged \$3.70 for the club, but this will not be itemized. If he subscribes for these three items for his library, the figuring would be as follows:

Current Literature.....	\$1.75
Cosmopolitan.....	.85
Hampton's Magazine.....	1.10
Total.....	\$3.70

So, in the end the library rates and the clubbing rates are the same.

According to clearing-house rules at present a library may send its list for estimates to any of the large agencies and when they are returned they should balance to a cent. But since October, 1910, the agents have been cutting, although the clearing-house does not admit it. It is of course possible for libraries to obtain the advantage of such cutting by securing competitive bids, though as a matter of fact the different totals will vary only slightly. A library should be able to secure as good rates from one agency as another, large or small. All the large agencies publish catalogs, listing most magazines at a catalog price, the minimum price to libraries or individuals (the same to either, and it may or may not be less than the publisher's list price, which is usually also given in the catalog). Other magazines in the catalog have a "class number" for use in determining the price at which class publications may be sold with other publications in magazine clubs. The class number may be resolved into dollars and cents by multiplying it by 5. This class price is not quoted to individuals on single subscriptions, but only on publications when included in clubs. It apparently is not supposed to be so quoted to libraries either, except as they order more than one magazine which would be included in a club for an individual. This, however, is done. The situation in the magazine business seems to be constantly changing and libraries must watch the agents' catalogs closely. In general it may be said that the frequent changing of agents is not desirable, but a library should see to it that its agent is giving the best possible prices.

It may be added that a few libraries have found it possible to obtain the best rates by ordering from local dealers in current periodicals who furnish some items from stock at cheaper prices than the agencies give. This advantageous arrangement is, however, very unusual.

It is generally cheaper and easier to buy back numbers of periodicals from the regular dealers in odd numbers, rather than from the magazine publishers. There are a number of such dealers whose catalogs are sent occasionally to practically all libraries. The catalogs, however, rarely list anything but complete volumes.

In buying complete volumes of periodicals it is necessary to collate carefully, for inaccuracies are very common. The best dealers will make good all imperfections. It is always risky to buy volumes of magazines at auction. It is possible to obtain from many of the dealers back volumes of popular periodicals at very reasonable prices, but there are only a few dealers on whom a library can depend for the less common Poole sets. Their charges are not low, but the perfection they guarantee is worth paying for. There are dealers who make a specialty of sets of technical periodicals which are usually expensive.

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A. L. A. Booklist. Subject index, 1905-June, 1910 (v. 1-6). Paper, 25 cents.

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